ORIGIN AND DESIGN

OF THE

PARTICULAR BAPTIST FUND,

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PARTICULAR BAPTIST FUND,

ESTABLISHED IN LONDON IN 1717:

WITH THE

RULES AND ORDERS

AS REVISED IN 1817.

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ORIGIN AND DESIGN

OF THE

PARTICULAR BAPTIST FUND.

THE Particular Baptist Fund has been established upwards of a century. It sprang from the Christian benevolence of a few members of the Baptist Churches in the metropolis. The origin and design of this truly excellent Institution, will be best explained in the words of its pious Founders.

"Copy of a paper and proposals for raising a Fund, which "was sent to the several Congregations of the Particular "Baptists, in and about London, in the year 1717.

"Whereas several ministers and other persons, who have "the interest and welfare of the Baptist Churches in Eng-"land very much at heart, have observed for some time "with great grief and trouble, the little correspondence and "union that there is between those of that Denomination, the

"great decay of that Interest in some parts of England, "and the difficulty they have to keep up the worship of "God with any tolerable reputation in other parts; the "great want of able and well qualified persons to defend the "truth, and to supply those Churches that are in want of "Ministers; the poverty and distress which some employed "in that sacred office are exposed to, for want of a compe-"tent maintenance for themselves and families; and the "frequent applications that are made to some private persons "on those occasions, who neither have ability to help all, "nor opportunity to inquire into the truth of every particular "case. It was therefore proposed and earnestly desired by "the said persons, that a public Fund or Stock, be raised to "redress these grievances; and more especially, for the sup-"port and maintenance of honourable Ministers, and pro-"viding for a succession of such."

Six of our Churches united in this object, and raised a small Fund for its accomplishment, viz.

"Great East Cheap, under the Pastoral care of John Noble,
"Cripplegate - - - - - - John Skeep,
"Little Wild Street - - - - - Thomas Harrison,
"Devonshire Square - - - - - Mark Key,
"Horslydown - - - - - - Benjamin Stinton,
"Fleur de Lys Court - - - - - Edmund Wallin.

The religious belief of those who laid the foundation of this Institution, was that of "particular redemption" as generally held by Calvinists; who maintain that *grace*,

sovereign and distinguishing grace, has laid the foundation of a sinner's salvation—that *grace* raises the superstructure, and that "the top stone shall be brought forth with shoutings of *grace, grace,* unto it!" They adopted the title of "The Particular Baptist Fund to distinguish themselves from other Baptists who hold the doctrine of "general redemption." The term *particular* had no reference whatever to *strict* communion, as has been imagined by some; the exhibitions of this Funds, having been uniformly made to persons practising free or mixed communion, with the same readiness, as to others. And it is perhaps deserving of remark, that although the Funds of this Institution, have been replenished and increased principally by those Churches and individuals who have practised *strict* communion; yet they have never withheld their bounty from those who differed from them on this subject: a fact highly honourable to our forerunners in this important cause.

In the origin and design of this Institution, we discover not only an ardent zeal for the welfare of the Baptist denomination, but for the happiness of man; as it was formed to extend the knowledge of divine truth. It embraces *the comfort of poor Ministers whose Churches and Congregations were incapable of affording them the means of a reputable support.* It provides for *the education of pious young men, whose hearts are directed towards the work of the Christian ministry,* and *who are judged to have promising talents for the service of the sanctuary;* and it also afforded an opportunity (in conformity with its general design) to give encouragement to the *first* Missionary efforts which were made by the denomination in the principality of Wales.

In the year 1733, an addition was made to the funded property by MR. JOHN HOLLIS, who by Will left 1100*l.* new South Sea Annuities, the interest of which was to be distributed annually amongst the poor of the Churches then associated in this Fund: which churches at that period were under the pastoral care of MR. DEW, MR. WALLIN, MR. BRAITHWAITE, MR. RICHARDSON, MR. BRINE, MR. GIFFORD, MR. ARNOLD, MR. REES, MR. GILL, and MR. WILSON. MR. HOLLIS made also during his life several other generous donations. Amongst the principal Benefactors to this Fund, may be placed MR. THOMAS HOLLIS, MR. SEYMOUR WOODS, THOMAS WATSON, Esq., MR. DAVID LANGTON, MR. JOSEPH BUTLER, MR. JOSEPH AGITT, and MR. THOMAS LEIGH; and at a more recent period WILLIAM FULLER, Esq., by a liberal Donation, and MR. STEPHEN WILLIAMS, by his Legacy, have aided this Fund; which has been still further increased by the valuable Bequest of MRS. MARY COX; and more especially by the Donations and Bequests of our highly esteemed friend MR. WILLIAM TAYLOR.

In the year 1771, an excellent address was circulated by the Ministers and Messengers intrusted with the management of the "Particular Baptist Fund in London," "to the Churches and Elders of the same faith and order in the kingdom of England, and principality of Wales"—respecting the "commencement, constitution, and use of the Fund," from which some extracts are deserving of notice, as they evince the deep regard felt by our pious predecessors, for the promotion of this benevolent design.

" Dearly beloved,

" The noble design of the Fund, we have the honour " to direct, cannot fail of approving itself to all who delight " in the communion of saints. On this presumption we pro- " mise ourselves, that a particular account of its commence- " ment, constitution and use, with a view to aid you in this " work of faith, and labour of love, will not be unacceptable " or vain. The forlorn and low state of the Baptist Churches " in respect to their fellowship and capacity for maintaining " a decent and respectable ministry, had long grieved many " pious brethren in *London*, whose affections were set on " the house of our God, and who were inspired with an " ardent desire of assisting their dear fellow Christians, " and opening a free and universal correspondence in bro- " therly love, to their mutual advantage and the glory of " God.

" At length in the year 1717, with hearts full of zeal, " and a generous resolution to do every thing in their power " for obtaining their wish, a meeting was held (on June " the 4th) and the important affair introduced by the following " tender and benevolent memorial. (Vide page 1.)

" This agreeable proposal was immediately carried into ex- " ecution, by several Churches in this city, who cheerfully " subscribed according to their ability. And having brought " in their bounty, it was agreed, that the management of " this Fund should be by the Elders and Messengers of " the Churches; the number of the latter, from one to three, " in proportion to the sum advanced by the community; " and that no Church have more than *three* Messengers " annually chosen. And it was further resolved, that any

" person who contributed fifty pounds as his own free gift,
" being a member of a Church concerned in this Fund,
" may be annually invited to join in the direction: And for
" the despatch of business, it was likewise determined that
" *two* Elders, and *five* Messengers, provided always that the
" number be extended to four Congregations, shall make a
" quorum.

" The Stock of the Society was from the beginning, and
" continues to be laid out in Government securities, as the
" managers in full committee approve, in the names of *three*
" Treasurers chosen by them, who execute a declaration of
" trust, which is ordered to be annually read at the board;
" and two or more Messengers are appointed to audit and
" sign the accounts of the Treasurers. This is the sum of
" the disinterested and social plan laid by our worthy prede-
" cessors, now in glory, whose memory is precious to those
" who love Zion.

" The view of this excellent constitution, extends to what-
" ever may promote the comfort and felicity of the Churches;
" and its stated objects are comprised under *three* denomi-
" nations, namely, *Elders*, *Congregations*, and *Students*,
" or reputable disciples, recommended by the Church to
" which they belong, who are preparing for the work of the
" ministry; for whose education and reading, a proportion
" of the Stock, with the increase thereof, was early set
" apart to the amount of near the fourth part of the capital
" then existing; since which it has greatly increased by con-
" siderable Legacies, expressly bequeathed for that laudable
" purpose.

" At first, six Churches only engaged in this service, but

" the next year several others united. Their subscriptions " together fell short of twelve hundred pounds, but in less " than five years the Stock of the Funds was between two " and three thousand pounds, since then it has increased to " more than double that sum—the interest of which, with " the Collections every year from each Congregation, and " sometimes occasional gifts, being fully expended, have " hitherto enabled us to answer the several appointments in " classes or otherwise, as appears in the account current of " the lists which are annually printed, and delivered to the " Elders of the Churches concerned: so graciously has the " Lord been pleased to smile on this great undertaking! " The produce of our Stock last year was two hundred and " forty pounds, a considerable sum in itself, yet far from " adequate to the necessary disbursements of the same year, " as 191 cases were admitted, to which 684*l.* was disbursed.

" You see then, beloved, the objects are numerous, whose " expences increase by the excessive price of provisions in " general, under which the poor more especially groan. Our " ability is not equal to the supply of their wants, which " loudly call for all the assistance that can be obtained from " those, who are cordially affected to the truth and order of " the gospel, in a time of general declension and error.

" It is our utmost endeavour still further to extend the " benign influence of this truly evangelical Institution, that " every deserving object might be considered, and that where " it is needful, a larger supply may be afforded.

" We hope our beloved friends in every part of the nation, " who have hitherto been unacquainted with the particulars " now laid before them will find the same fellowship of the

intended to aid this design.) Of this class many have received assistance which has added greatly to the comfort of their declining days, and been the occasion of exciting their pious gratitude.

That proportion of the Fund directed by the donors to be appropriated to the purposes of *Education*, has been so applied; and since the establishment of the "*Baptist Academical Institution*" *at Stepney*, the Fundees have voted a specific sum to be applied to the general purposes of Education in a Seminary that is quite congenial with the sentiments of the Members connected with this Fund, and almost under its immediate eye.

Among the numerous objects that solicit the regard of Christian Benevolence, perhaps none is calculated to afford more substantial benefit to those who "minister in holy things" than this Fund. And indeed testimonies of its seasonable and salutary assistance, are often communicated to the Managers by its thankful recipients.

The great utility and importance of an Institution founded on the "love of the truth," and supported by the generous confidence of the friends of truth, are too evident to escape observation. Its constitution and design meeting the approbation of many individuals, a channel has been opened through which their bounty might flow, to promote the cause of truth; and thus has the capital of this Fund increased, by Donations and Bequests, which it is highly probable would not otherwise have been applied with equal satisfaction to the pressing necessities of those who are engaged in the work of the ministry.

From Donations, Collections, and Dividends on the

Funded property, the managers are enabled in the present year to distribute not less than 2550*l.* to upwards of 320 cases; a noble relief in times of peculiar distress!

The Churches and Congregations in London, and its vicinity, who at present unite in this labour of love to their necessitous brethren in the ministry, are

Bow, Middlesex, Rev. William Newman, D.D.

Carter Lane, Southwark, Rev. John Rippon, D.D.

Devonshire Square, Rev. Thomas Price.

Eagle Street, Red Lion Square, Rev. Joseph Ivimey.

Keppel Street, Russel Square, Rev. George Pritchard.

Maze Pond, Southwark, Rev. Isaac Mann, M.A.

Prescott Street, Goodman's Fields, Rev. Thomas Griffin.

Unicorn Yard, Southwark, Rev. George Gibbs.

Wild Street (Little), Lincoln's Inn Fields, Rev. James Hargreaves.

At each of which places of worship, a collection is publicly made every year in aid of this Institution, when the poorest among our assemblies have an opportunity of practically expressing their regard for the cause of Christ; and for the relief of truly necessitous ministers engaged in publishing the glad tidings of salvation to perishing men.

While the managers of this Fund consider themselves as the almoners of the bounty of others, and are aiming to discharge the trust committed to them with fidelity and discretion, they are bound to inquire respecting the religious views held by those who apply for assistance, and also if they are persons of a good moral character, and are in this respect

"holding forth the word of life," ever bearing in remembrance that the "grace which bringeth salvation" relaxes not our obligation to obey the divine precepts, but teaches the denial of all ungodliness and every worldly lust, and "to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

However inconsiderable the beginning of this Fund, when compared with the extent of its design; this small rivulet, under the favour of an indulgent and overruling Providence, has in time past been the means of refreshing the bowels of many faithful labourers in the vineyard of God; and has now increased to a stream of benevolence, which diffuses its benefits to no inconsiderable number of pious, laborious, and useful Ministers of Jesus Christ.

RULES AND ORDERS

AS REVISED IN 1817.

I. THAT this Fund shall be for the use and advantage of those Churches, that go under the denomination of "*Particular Baptists.*"

II. That the Churches who *have made* a present of £50 to the Capital of this Fund, are entitled to send their Elder, and one Messenger, to concur in transacting the business of it; such as have made a present of £100 may send their Elder and two Messengers, and such as have made a present of £150 may send their Elder and three Messengers.

III. That the Elders and Messengers of the Churches *may* also associate with themselves, in the direction of this Fund, any member of a Church that has been, or is at present connected with this Fund, who has made a present of not less than £50 to be added to the Capital. And that a Member of any Baptist Church who makes a present of £50 or upwards be eligible to be invited to act with the Managers, if the Fundees be unanimous on the occasion.

IV. That the management and direction of the affairs of this Fund, shall be confided to the Elders and Messengers, which are to be annually appointed by their respective Churches, and to those individuals who are associated with them; and that they shall meet and dine together on the first Tuesday in March, in every year; and choose the following officers, viz. three Treasurers, three Trustees, two Auditors, and a Secretary, all by ballot, if any Manager shall require it.

V. That besides the meeting in March, the Managers shall have other meetings by adjournment, as business may require, any seven of which Managers shall make a quorum; provided such seven belong to any three of the Churches associated in this Fund; and every meeting to be opened with prayer.

VI. The Treasurers shall execute a Declaration of Trust to the Trustees, in which shall be stated the amount of the different Stocks appertaining to this Fund, and the purposes to which they are applicable, and that the Dividends arising from the said Stock shall be given up or applied to such use as the Managers shall direct, and they shall also submit their accounts *annually* to the examination of Auditors, appointed by the Managers, whose approbation shall be their discharge.

VII. That a Manager from each of the Churches in connection with this Fund, shall annually bring the amount of a collection publicly made in the Church and

Congregation to which he belongs, to be added to the annual distribution; and any other monies that may come into the hands of any other member of this Fund, shall be reported and brought in the first opportunity.

VIII. That the distributions of this Fund shall be annual, and made for the *relief of Ministers and Churches of the Particular Baptist Denomination in England and Wales, the Education of young persons of the same persuasion for the ministry — Donations of books to young Students and Ministers, and for any other charitable purpose (consistent with the general design) which the Managers shall approve.*

IX. That the distribution of this Fund shall be reduced to certain classes, at the discretion of the Managers: and that in these classes no Congregation, which is not a *regular Church*, or that has not *a stated Minister* and *weekly preaching*, shall be considered.

X. That every application to this Fund shall be made in writing, and transmitted annually to the Secretary. In every *new case*, a brief but distinct account is required of the sentiments held by the party applying respecting the *doctrines* and *precepts* of divine revelation, and also an *explicit* statement of the circumstances of the Minister, and the extent of their capacity among whom he labours, to afford him a competent support; which statement shall be attested by two neighbouring Ministers,

or other persons of reputation in the neighbouring Churches.

XI. That every Church thus applying shall make a public annual Collection in the Congregation, with which they stand connected, *for the use of this Fund.* When the Minister is expected to read publicly, the account of the *Origin* and *Design* of the Fund, which is contained in the annual letters of the Fundees, and to insert the amount of such collection in their letter of application.

XII. That the exhibitions of this Fund for the Education of pious young persons for the Christian Ministry, shall be applied for the support of such who have been baptized on a profession of their faith, are members of Particular Baptist Churches, and are approved and recommended by the Churches to which they belong; and who are willing to submit to such methods of trial, as may be thought advisable to ascertain their capacities for the work.

XIII. That the Secretary shall take down the Minutes of each Meeting, and when confirmed, transcribe them fairly into a book; and receive for his trouble such compensation as the Managers shall approve.

XIV. That such part of the Capital of this Fund as is at the discretion of the Managers, shall not be

diminished, nor any part of it sold out, without each Manager being first summoned, and not less than two thirds of those *then present* consenting to it.

XV. Any other Church of the "Particular Baptist" denomination, in or near London, may, on the approbation of the Managers, be admitted to send their Elder and Messenger or Messengers, on the following conditions, viz. by making a present of £100 to the Capital, to send their Elder and *one* Messenger; of £150 their Elder and *two* Messengers; and of £200 their Elder and *three* Messengers.

XVI. That these Rules and Regulations be publicly read at the Meeting in March, if required, and always lie on the table to be consulted.

FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE CAPITAL IN GENERAL.

I GIVE to the Treasurer, or Treasurers, for the time being, of the Particular Baptist Fund in London, the Managers of which now meet at the BAPTIST MISSION HOUSE, No. 6, Fen Court, Fenchurch Street, the sum of
sterling, to be paid by my Executors within
months next after my decease; to be added to that part of the Capital of the said Fund, of which only the Interest is applied as the Managers of the said Fund, or the major part of them, are pleased to direct.

FORM OF A BEQUEST AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MANAGERS.

I GIVE to the Treasurer, or Treasurers, for the time being, of the Particular Baptist Fund, the Managers of which now meet at the BAPTIST MISSION HOUSE, Fen Court, Fenchurch Street, the sum of sterling, to be paid by my Executors within months next after my decease; to be added to that part of the Capital of the said Fund, the Principal, as well as the Interest, of which is applied as the Managers of the said Fund, or the major part of them, are pleased to direct.

FORM OF A BEQUEST FOR THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS.

I GIVE to the Treasurer, or Treasurers, for the time being, of the Particular Baptist Fund in London, the Managers of which now meet at the BAPTIST MISSION HOUSE, Fen Court, Fenchurch Street, the sum of
sterling, to be paid by my Executors within
months next after my decease; to be added to that part of the Capital of the said Fund, the Interest of which is applied by the Managers of the said Fund, or the major part of them, for the benefit of such persons as they approve, and who devote themselves to, or are engaged in, the Ministry of the Gospel; by supporting them, giving them books, or otherwise promoting their improvement in knowledge, as to such Managers appears agreeable.

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